

## **Amendments to the Specification**

Please add the following new heading before paragraph [0002]:

### **BACKGROUND**

Please add the following new heading before paragraph [0003]:

### **SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION**

Please amend paragraph [0003] as follows:

[0003] ~~By contrast with this, the~~ An object of the invention is to provide a connection region for attaching an add-on part, in particular an axle bolster, to a vehicle body, in which positionally accurate and secure fastening of the add-on part is ensured without weak points occurring locally with regard to corrosion and to connection points which cannot be monitored between the vehicle body and the stiffening elements.

Please delete paragraph [0004].

Please amend paragraph [0005] as follows:

[0005] The body-side connection region according to the present invention comprises a connecting element which is provided with a receiving region for attaching the add-on part. The connecting element further comprises a first fastening section for welding to one or more carrier components of the vehicle body and a second fastening section for connecting to a stiffening panel of the vehicle body. The first fastening section is designed for resistance pressure welding and has a corresponding surface coating; the second fastening section is at a distance from the first fastening section and is connected to the stiffening panel, thereby achieving torque support between the first and second fastening sections. On the one hand, the connection region according to the invention therefore offers (owing to the resistance pressure welding between the carrier component and connecting element) the possibility of producing a welded joint with a carrier component without damaging the corrosion protection at the connection region. On the other hand, it is possible to achieve improved rigidity in the fastening of an add-on part to any desired carrier component of a vehicle body: the spaced-apart, second fastening section allows a

type of torque support to be achieved between the carrier component and stiffening panel. The secure fastening ~~is~~ may be ensured hereby not only at one point of the stiffening element, instead, a type of two-point fastening via, on the one hand, resistance pressure welding on the vehicle body side and, on the other hand, a detachable or nondetachable second, spaced-apart fastening with the stiffening element ensures the highest possible efficiency in terms of stiffening. The connection region according to the invention may have ~~has~~ increased torsional and deformation rigidity, without the fastening section on the connecting element having to be laboriously finished or leading to problems in terms of corrosion resistance of the panel sections. The body-side fastening by means of resistance pressure welding can result ~~results~~ in no damage being caused to the overall corrosion protection at the mounting points. To this end, the connecting element ~~is~~ may be advantageously provided with a surface coating which is compatible with joining techniques, and can additionally be sealed with a PVC layer, for example.

Please amend paragraph [0006] as follows:

[0006] The connection region according to the invention can ensure ~~ensures~~ that, when joining the connecting element, a high degree of repeatability is achieved, as is required particularly for fully automated large series production. The joining method of resistance pressure welding according to the invention can achieve ~~achieves~~ a high degree of reproducibility and dimensional accuracy combined with only small position or production tolerances. The connecting elements may serve equally as positioning aids even before they are welded. The fastening points between the connecting element and the stiffening element or the carrier component can also be quality-monitored in a nondestructive manner. This may be performed, for example, via an ultrasound monitoring method by contrast with conventional shielded arc welded joints between the panel parts to be connected, in which nondestructive testing is not possible. The connection region according to the invention also has the advantage that even relatively thick metal panels and a large number of panels (as carrier component) lying one against the other in layers do not present any problem in terms of a connection with the connecting element and the stiffening element to be fastened thereon. Resistance pressure welding is thus extremely effective and can be used in a large number of applications of such stiffening regions on vehicle bodies.

Please replace paragraph [0012] with the following amended paragraph:

**[0012]** The unitary-construction vehicle body according to one embodiment of the invention as claimed in claim 7 has a floor region on which are provided a plurality of connection regions at which an add-on part is fastened. Each of the connection regions has - as described above - a connecting element which is provided with a first and second fastening section and which is connected in these regions to the floor or to a stiffening panel. The connection with the floor is carried out by means of resistance pressure welding, which ensures that there is no local loss of corrosion protection at the edge of a mounting opening in the body part. The welded joint is situated slightly to the outside of the respective mounting opening in the form of a preferably protruding, annular bead, so that the fusion of the metal due to the welding operation occurs in a region of the stud that is not accessible from outside. Subsequent finishing of the connection point is not required. The second fastening section of the connecting element provides additional torque support within the stiffening element, with the result that the connecting element constitutes a type of support stud.

Please add the following new heading before paragraph [0013]:

#### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Please add the following new heading before paragraph [0017]:

#### DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Please amend the heading on top of page 8 with the following amended heading:

~~Patent claims~~ WHAT IS CLAIMED IS: